DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 236 929 FL 014 084

TITLE English Teaching Profile: Portugal.
INSTITUTION British Council, London (England). English Language and Literature Div.
PUB DATE Jun 83
NOTE 10p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Information Analyses (070)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Educational Policy; *English (Second Language); Foreign Countries; *Language Role; Language Teachers; *Second Language Instruction
IDENTIFIERS *Portugal

ABSTRACT

The role of English and English instruction in Portugal is outlined. Although English is growing in importance, French is still more commonly studied as a second language in Portugal. English instruction within the education system, English teacher supply and training, the role of the British Council in teacher training, availability of English textbooks, English instruction outside the education system, and British and American support for English instruction are discussed. A project involving the contrastive analysis of English and Portuguese is noted. (RW)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
The British Council
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ED236929

This Profile is provisional

ENGLISH TEACHING PROFILE

Country: Portugal

Date: June 1983

1. ROLE AND STATUS OF ENGLISH

In recent years English has continued to grow in importance. Overall, however, French is still more commonly studied than English. The following figures refer to the number of students who chose to start French or English in Escolas Preparatórias:

	FRENCH	ENGLISH
1978-79	78,000	50,000
1979-80	75,000	51,000
1980-81 *	92,000	64,000
1981-82 *	91,500	75,000

* These figures include adult evening students.

FL014084

As can be seen, English is gradually becoming more popular. This is due not so much to any recent internal social/political change as to the perceived international relevance of English as the main language of communication for professional, commercial, tourist and entertainment reasons.

In the professions a knowledge of English - at least a reading knowledge - is all but indispensable. Scientists, technologists, doctors etc, are obliged to keep abreast of developments through English-medium journals and publications. In business and commerce, too, English is extremely important and many large companies organise language tuition on the premises for their employees. Britain is still Portugal's main trading partner, at least for exports. The Armed Forces also organise their own English classes as English is the 'command language' of NATO, of which Portugal was a founding member.

© The British Council, London 1983

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be produced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the permission of the British Council, 10 Spring Gardens, London SW1A 2BN, United Kingdom.

The tourist trade is flourishing again after the decline that followed the 1974 Revolution and Britons form the largest percentage of foreign visitors. As elsewhere, English is used as the lingua franca of the tourist industry. On television and in the cinemas there are many films in English (mainly from the USA) which are screened in the original language with sub-titles. A large number of serials from Britain and the USA are also televised. Inevitably British and American music, especially pop music, has a large following.

English is not used as a medium of instruction in schools and universities. It is, however, used as a study language in science, technology and medicine at all levels other than basic. It is widely used, in air traffic, sea traffic and NATO command.

2. ENGLISH WITHIN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

Primary Schools (= Escolas Primárias: first four years of schooling - "1º - 4º anos de escolaridade")

No foreign language is taught at the primary level in the state system. Certain private schools offer English, however.

Middle Schools (= Escolas Preparatóriàs: fifth and sixth years of schooling - "5º and 6º anos de escolaridade")

One foreign language is compulsorily studied from the start of the Escolas Preparatórias (EP). The choice is almost always between English and French; a very small number of schools also offer German. The chosen language is studied for four hours a week. Often the choice of language depends on the availability of teachers, eg in some outlying areas of the north only French is offered.

Secondary Schools (= Escolas Secundárias: seventh to ninth years of schooling - "7º - 9º anos de escolaridade" PLUS two years 'Complementar' "10. e 11º anos de escolaridade" (the equivalent of the sixth form) PLUS a pre-university/pre-career twelfth year - 12º ano de escolaridade").

A common-core syllabus in the seventh to ninth years is followed by all students at Escolas Secundárias (curso unificado). Students begin a second foreign language at ES and continue with the one started in EP. The choice is between French and English, with German offered in some schools. The language begun in EP is continued for two hours a week, the new language for three hours a week. Students who do English over five years - at EP and ES - and those who do English over three years at ES are considered to have reached the same standard by the end of the ninth year despite the big discrepancy in the number of teaching hours (see diagram below). Both sets of students take the same examination at the end of the ninth year.

	FFL hrs per week	SFL hrs per week	FFL approx. hrs per year	SFL approx. hrs per year
EP 5th year	4	-	120	-
6th year	4	-	120	-
7th year	2	3	60	90
ES 8th year	2	3	60	90
9th year	2	3	60	90
		Total	420	270

(FFL = first foreign language: SFL = second foreign language)

The examination at the end of the ninth year determines whether students proceed to the Complementar. The English papers are set and marked by the individual schools, the only examinations standardised nationally being mathematics and Portuguese.

In the tenth and eleventh years all students are required to study Portuguese, philosophy and a foreign language, the latter for two hours a week. Beyond these subjects the students specialise in science and technology, social sciences, economics and business studies or humanities; students of the humanities may choose to continue two foreign languages, and in a few cases three.

The twelfth year has two main branches:

(i) Via de Ensino - preparing students for later university studies, and selecting students for university entrance on the basis of performance in national examinations;

(ii) Via Profissionalizante - providing more specialised career-oriented studies prior to the students' entering certain careers, eg health training, secretarial work, technical work, etc.

Students in the Via de Ensino who intend to specialise in English at university follow a course comprising advanced language, a survey of British and American literature including the study of set books, and a survey of British and American history. The Ministry of Education recommends that the syllabus is approached through certain broad thematic areas, eg conflict, discrimination, migration, consumer society etc. Students not intending to specialise in English at university follow a lower-level course of language and modern themes of general interest. It was intended that students in the Via Profissionalizante should follow career-linked English courses but so far this has not been fully implemented.

Syllabuses

Both in EP and ES national syllabuses provided by the Ministry of Education determine the content of the English programmes at all levels. They are, however, fairly flexibly interpreted and individual schools, largely responsible for their own testing system, feel free to add to or omit various parts of the syllabuses. Each school is able to choose whichever textbooks it considers most appropriate (see Section 4).

Inspection

Teachers are rarely, if ever, inspected officially as regards their professional ability. So-called inspectors normally go into schools only to help solve any problems connected with the teaching staff, and then only at the invitation of the school. There are Inspectorates of this type (Delegações Regionais de Inspecção) in Lisbon, Porto and Coimbra.

English for Specific Purposes (ESP)

Very few ESP-type courses exist in Portugal. There are a number of government-recognised higher education institutes, eg ISLA (Instituto Superior de Línguas e Administração) and Novas Profissões, whose students may opt for English courses such as English for Secretaries, English for Tourist Guides etc. A few courses exist with a bias, especially lexical, towards a particular specialism, eg Nautical Studies at the Escola Náutica (Merchant Navy Training College). For the past three years the British Institute in Lisbon has been offering ESG courses (English for Special Groups) both off-site - in

banks, ministries and the army - and in-house - short, semi-intensive one-month courses for doctors, secretaries and business people. The creation of vocational courses in the recently overhauled tenth, eleventh and twelfth years might possibly lead to the development of special English courses.

Teaching of Adults

Many of the larger EP and ES work three separate shifts, two during the day-time for school children (from 8.30-13.00 and from 14.00-18.30 approximately) and a third in the evening for adults (from 19.00-23.00). Adults who wish to resume their formal schooling are able to do so in this way. They basically follow the same syllabuses and sit the same examinations as the school-children.

Broadcasting

Television is used to reach outlying districts where no EP are available. This scheme is called "Telescola". Children watch the programmes together with a monitor (often a local primary school teacher) who then discusses the content with the children. In foreign languages French is offered in this way but not English.

Universities

Nowadays students who wish to specialise in English Studies also choose another major subject, usually German or Portuguese, occasionally French. Such courses are offered in the state universities (Universidade de Lisboa; Universidade Nova in Lisbon; Porto; Coimbra; Aveiro; Braga and the Azores) where after four years' study students gain a licenciatura. The courses consist of advanced study of the English language; British and North American literature; and linguistics. Except in the new, small universities of Aveiro, Braga and the Azores (see Section 3 below) there is no methodological preparation for the many students who will on graduation become teachers of English. A few students will be admitted to the Master's degree (mestrado) - a further two years' study comprising taught courses and dissertation; PhD degrees are only taken by career academics.

Native-speakers of English are employed in all the universities as language teachers (leitores). They receive the same salary as Portuguese lecturers (assistentes) but cannot hold tenure - in practice, however, their annual contract is automatically renewed. They must have the equivalent of a Portuguese licenciatura to be able to teach at a university.

There is a certain amount of "service English" taught in some faculties eg Economics, Journalism.

At the private universities - Católica and Livre - it is not possible to study for a degree in English.

3. TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

No British teachers work in the Portuguese state school system.

On the mainland there is no shortage of graduates wanting to teach English; in Madeira and in the Azores many non-graduates are employed out of necessity. There is, however, a severe lack of adequate teacher-training. The main system currently in operation for teachers in EP and ES is in-service and

part-time spread over two school years. Trainees (formandos or profissionalizandos) are given their training by the head of English in their school (the delegado). These delegados are in turn supported by the regional orientador pedagógico, a peripatetic adviser/supervisor responsible for the successful work of a number of delegados in his or her region. These orientadores pedagógicos give training sessions to the delegados but not usually to the formandos.

No specific teacher-training programme exists: instead the trainees are expected to identify their own training needs according to the school they work in, the students they teach and their own attitudes towards the teaching/learning process. Throughout the training period assignments are set and assessed by the delegado, who also observes the trainees in action. At the end of the two years it is the responsibility of the delegados to give an appropriate grade to each trainee. Those successful are considered qualified teachers.

As it is running at present (1982-83) the system is very wasteful of the limited resources. In the secondary sector there are nine orientadores pedagógicos supervising 25-30 delegados who are training a mere 35-40 teachers; in the middle school sector things are somewhat better - 23 orientadores pedagógicos supervising 78 delegados who are training 259 teachers.

Predictably hundreds of teachers apply each year to do a training course with little or no chance of being accepted.

Another route to becoming a qualified teacher exists but caters for relatively few people. The new universities of Aveiro and Braga, both in the north of mainland Portugal, and the very recently formed University of the Azores on the main island of Sao Miguel, all offer undergraduate courses specifically for intending teachers. The students follow courses in their chosen specialisations and also in educational studies, including methodology; in their last year they spend much of their time attached to a school giving supervised classes. They leave university with a licenciatura and the status of qualified teacher.

British Council Cooperation: The British Council created a new post in late 1977 for a teacher-trainer, half of whose time is spent working in conjunction with the Ministry of Education to help and advise EP and ES teachers with methods, materials etc. Recent work has included:

(i) two-day in-service courses for invited teachers in most of the large towns of Portugal, including Madeira and Azores. The focus of these short courses has been practical methodology. (Over the last four years British Council Institute teacher-trainers have worked in Viana do Castelo, Braga, Guimaraes, Porto, Aveiro, Vila Real, Bragança, Viseu, Guarda, Covilha, Coimbra, Leiria, Tomar, Abrantes, Castelo Branco, Portalegre, Santarém, Lisboa, Setúbal, Évora, Beja, Faro, Portimão, Funchal, Angra do Heroismo and Ponta Delgada).

(ii) one-week intensive in-service teacher-training courses each September for groups of approximately forty teachers. For example, in 1982 two courses were held in Porto and two in the Lisbon area. In addition to local tutors the British Council invites EFL specialists from Britain.

(iii) the regular production of a national NEWSLETTER for Portuguese teachers of English. This was started in late 1979 and has appeared termly ever since. The aim is to provide some practical support to all

teachers in the country. The Ministry of Education distributes free copies to every EP and ES and in addition several hundred teachers take out personal subscriptions.

(iv) two-week language courses in July each year for Portuguese teachers of English in towns where teachers feel especially isolated. The focus of these courses is on reactivating rusty oral/aural skills. In 1983 it is hoped to offer six such courses in Angra do Heroismo, Ponta Delgada, Faro, Bragança, Viseu and Beja.

(v) an annual Gulbenkian-funded course held for the last four years in Chichester and organised by the British Council Regional Directorate in Brighton.

(vi) arrangements for Manchester University to send a group of post-graduates studying for the Diploma in the Teaching of English Overseas (Dip TEO) to do a four- to five-week teaching practice in Lisbon schools. This first took place in 1980 and is being repeated annually.

(vii) participation in the annual TESOL convention (see Section 9 below). Usually a number of Institute teacher-trainers give practical methodology sessions.

4. MATERIALS SUPPORT

Schools generally have an adequate supply of textbooks: the main problem nowadays is for teachers to choose wisely from among the wide range of course-books available in Portugal. The well-known British courses, such as Strategies, Encounters and Exchanges, Access, Contact English, etc, are commonly in use (especially the Strategies series) as well as many locally-produced books. A new bookshop specialising in English books, with branches in Lisbon and Porto, has greatly improved the general availability of EFL books.

Schools receive very limited finance to provide hardware and software. It is common, therefore, for coursebooks to be adopted without the accompanying tapes - although these may be crucial to the success of the books. Often teachers resort to buying tapes themselves despite the high prices.

5. EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION IN RELATION TO ENGLISH TEACHING

Details for this section are not available.

6. DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING OF THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH

Details for this section are not available.

7. ENGLISH OUTSIDE THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

In addition to the British Council's teaching operation (see Section 8 below) there exists an American counterpart, the American Language Institute, with branches in Lisbon and Porto. There are also many private language schools of varying standards which include the Central school of Languages (in Lisbon, Coimbra, Porto, Figueira da Foz, Barreiro and Funchal) the Cambridge School (part of the Linguarama organisation) and Berlitz. They all mainly teach general English although Cambridge School also offers English for Executives.

The Central School, which has International House backing, maintains high standards. As well as running courses in English language they act as a Royal Society of Arts (RSA) Centre (for the Further Education scheme) and also ran RSA Cert TEFL courses in 1979-80 and 1980-81. They also run popular one-month, teacher-training courses (for native-speakers and non-native speakers) in August and September each year. They have begun once more to offer occasional practical methodology sessions for local Portuguese teachers throughout the school year.

8. BRITISH SUPPORT FOR THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH

Official British support for the teaching of English is given exclusively through the British Council. At present the Council has two teaching centres in Lisbon and Coimbra and is closely linked with a third in Porto.

Lisbon (Instituto Britânico em Portugal: approx 4,500 students)

The Council employs a Director of Studies; one Assistant Director of Studies responsible for organising in-house teacher-training and for liaising with the Ministry of Education to provide methodological support for Portuguese teachers of English (see Section 3 above); three contract lecturer/supervisors, responsible mainly for the smooth running of the Institute's teaching programme but also involved in both the in-house teacher-training and the work with Portuguese teachers; and approximately fifty-five locally-employed teachers, all native speakers.

The teaching programme aims largely to prepare students for the Cambridge examinations (First Certificate, Proficiency and Diploma). Good results in these examinations are obtained every year eg in June 1982 a 77.3% pass rate at FCE and 50.3% at CPE.

Since 1978 the Institute has offered an annual part-time in-service RSA Cert TEFL course. Results have been very good. Whereas in 1978 the Institute had approximately thirty locally employed teachers, none of whom had a formal TEFL qualification, now 80% of the present staff of fifty-five are formally qualified. Most of those who are not qualified do relatively few teaching hours.

Currently four of the tutors are approved RSA Assessors for the practical part of this examination.

Coimbra (Casa da Inglaterra: approx. 700 students)

The British Council employs a locally-engaged Director and six locally-engaged teachers. The teaching programme is essentially the same as in Lisbon. In 1981-82 an RSA Cert TEFL course was run - as an extension of the Lisbon course

- and the results were very good. All the full-time teachers now have an EFL qualification.

Porto (Instituto Britanico: approx. 2,500 students)

Although the British Institute in Porto is run by an independent Board under the title "Associação Luso-Britânica", contacts with this one-time British Council Institute have remained close.

The Director of Studies is appointed by the Board but some teachers are recruited through the British Council in London. As in Lisbon and Coimbra the main emphasis of the teaching is directed towards the Cambridge exams.

The British Council's Regional Director operates from the Institute building.

9. AMERICAN SUPPORT FOR THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH

Apart from the American Language Institute (ALI) offering English language classes on similar lines to the British Institute, the Americans do not offer a regular programme of methodological support to Portuguese teachers of English.

An important recent development - American inspired - has been the founding of a branch of TESOL in Portugal. Most officials of TESOL have been ALI teachers in Porto and Lisbon; this school year (1982-83) the president and two of the vice-presidents are British. TESOL's main contribution is an annual convention held in alternate years in Porto and Lisbon, to which flock many hundreds of Portuguese teachers for the wisdom dispensed by the EFL gurus; a large book exhibition is mounted there by British, American and Portuguese publishers.

10. OTHER AGENCY SUPPORT

Details for this section are not available.

11. COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

Details for this section are not available.

12. CREATIVE WRITING

Details for this section are not available.

13. CURRENT RESEARCH

A long-standing project for a Contrastive Analysis of Portuguese and English and the eventual production of a pedagogic grammar is being conducted by Dr Carl James of the University of Bangor, North Wales, working with a selected group of Portuguese teachers. It is hoped that the results of this work will be published by the Gulbenkian Foundation.

14. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION

Details for this section are not available.

15. GENERAL STATEMENT

Details for this section are not available.